

Supplemental Statement of the Honorable Greg Walden
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Markup of the Discussion Draft to Reauthorize the Satellite Television Extension and
Localism Act
March 25, 2014

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Good morning. At this time, we resume the mark-up of the discussion draft to reauthorize the law that ensures that 1.5 million subscribers in hard-to-reach areas continue to receive broadcast content via their chosen satellite provider. (Satellite TV providers have more than 34 million customers nationwide.) This truly is “prime time” legislation, and we’re ready to move forward.

This draft legislation represents more than a year of work, discussions, hearings and negotiations—both among the affected industries and among ourselves on both sides of the aisle, and within our respective parties.

It proposes reasonable reforms—that can become law—to the current state of the video market –sensible, modern-day, deregulatory changes – that are supported by the major competitors in the marketplace: broadcasters, major cable operators, and satellite operators. Getting all three of these entities on the same page was no easy task—something that I know my colleagues understand. Any major changes put at risk our ability to move forward in a positive way to reauthorize this important service.

My Democratic colleagues, however, have expressed some concerns and we have worked to find common ground that would allow us to support a bipartisan bill within the framework of the narrow reforms we have laid out. We still have some work to do, but we are encouraged by the compromises we have reached so far.

In particular, we are able to agree on revisions to the integration ban provisions in section six of the draft. Mr. Latta and Mr. Green’s bipartisan legislation on this issue was the inspiration for the language in the draft, and the compromise achieves the same goal – the repeal of the CableCARD integration ban – and yet addresses the concern raised by some of our colleagues across the aisle.

This amendment will also place section four in brackets. I stand behind the language instructing the FCC to do its job and complete the quadrennial review of the media ownership rules before tinkering with JSAs – particularly because I believe that these JSAs provide benefits to rural television viewers. Placing this language in brackets is a show of good faith to our Democratic colleagues that we intend to work to see if we can reach agreement on that section.

Our staffs will continue to work toward bipartisan agreement in anticipation of markup by the full committee. I thank Ranking Members Waxman and Eshoo for their willingness to work with us to advance this bill and yield back the balance of my time.

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